



INSTRUCTIONS FOR DNA TESTING

DNA genetic testing is at times suggested as the final means of confirming the biological relationship between a parent and a child for acquisition of citizenship purposes. It is not normally a requirement of the Embassy, and is only suggested in the most problematic of cases. DNA testing, when properly conducted, is virtually 100 percent accurate, and a positive result will assuage any doubt about the parentage of the child.

The Embassy maintains a list (attached) of laboratories in the U.S. that are accredited by the American Association of Blood Banks (AABB) to perform genetic testing. The cost of the testing can vary, depending on which laboratory is used and whether or not the results are expedited. Fees normally range between \$600 and \$1,000, and the results are available between two and eight weeks after the laboratory receives the samples for analysis. **Costs for testing and related charges are borne by the family.**

One of the most important aspects of the testing process is the security of the samples taken from the two individuals. The chain of custody must be maintained from the moment the samples are taken by the physician until the kit arrives at the laboratory. Following the instructions below will ensure the validity of the test results.

- The genetic test is purchased by the parent, with instructions for the laboratory to forward the testing kit or authorization to either American Citizen Services Section, U.S. Embassy Guatemala, Avenida Reforma 7-01, Zone 10, Guatemala City, Guatemala or, preferably, to the Embassy panel physician who will take the samples: Dr. Carlos Vassaux, Ed. Torreblanca, 10o. Nivel, 14 Calle 7-13, Zona 9, tel. (502) 2331-5359.
- Arrangements should then be made to have the samples taken by one of the Embassy panel physicians. Once an appointment has been made with the panel physician, the American Citizen Services (ACS) Section should be so notified in advance.
- Parent and child then go to their scheduled appointment with an Embassy panel physician, where additional photos will be taken. The doctor will assemble and secure the package and return it by express courier to the laboratory. **Note:** The local office of the express courier may not accept prepayment from the United States.
- If either the parent or child resides in the United States, the parent should arrange with the lab to have the relevant sample taken in the U.S. and follow the normal procedure for having the other sample taken in Guatemala for use by the same authorized laboratory (list attached).
- An original notification of the results should always be sent directly to the Embassy, with a separate copy sent to the family. Once the Embassy has received its original copy showing a positive result, the citizenship case may proceed.
- Any questions regarding genetic testing should be directed to the Chief of the American Citizen Services Section, at (502) 2331-1541, ext. 4403, or by fax to (502) 2332-4353.